

VERMILION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD

Minutes of November 21, 2017 - 7:00pm | Municipal Complex Courtroom (687 Decatur)

Roll Call: E. Wakefield, B. Scholtz, W. Warden, D. Brudney, J. Logue (*late arrival*). Not Present: T. Parker, J. Keck.

Also Present: D. Corogin, PARKS DIRECTOR; C. Kuhns, RECREATION DIRECTOR; B. Holmes, COUNCIL REP.

Chairperson, E. Wakefield called the November 21, 2017, Vermilion Parks and Recreation Board meeting to order.

B. Scholtz MOVED; B. Warden seconded to approve the minutes of October 17, 2017. Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

CORRESPONDENCE/AUDIENCE/COMMUNITY GROUP USE PERMIT:

Community Event Group Use Permit:

Vermilion Chamber of Commerce Events –

2018 Woollybear Festival (46th Annual) – TBA in April – (Victory Park; Village on the Green; Exchange Park; East Exchange Park; Friendship Park; Main Street Beach) – All weekend/day.

2018 Festival of the Fish (52nd Annual) – June 14 – 17, 2018 (All day) – Victory Park; Village on the Green; Exchange Park; East Exchange Park; Friendship Park; Main Street Beach.

2018 3rd Thursday – May 17; June 21; July 19; August 16; September 20 (6PM – Sunset) - Victory Park; Village on the Green; Exchange Park; East Exchange Park; Friendship Park; Main Street Beach.

Concerts in the Park 2018 – July 8, 15, 22, 29 & August 5, 12, 19, 26 (6:30 – 8:30PM) – Victory Park

Vermilion Chamber Christmas Tree Lot 2018 – Raise money for local charity and promote Vermilion – November 23 – December 22, 2018 (All Day) – Village on the Green

D. Brudney MOVED; B. Warden seconded to approve all Community Event Group Use Permits submitted by the Vermilion Chamber of Commerce as listed above. Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

B. Wakefield advised Char Gabel of the Friends of Harbortown to submit the insurance declaration information via fax to the city offices to the attention of Anne Maiden and then they can put her Group Use Permits on the December agenda for approval.

Vermilion Skate Park –

Reed Hettel presented a status report on the Skate Park progress and showed the members a sketch of a proposed skate park that was prepared by Team Payne who has been in business building skate parks for 30 plus years. He said they have been discussing the location of a newly built park and have approached Phil Pempin, Superintendent of Vermilion Schools regarding the property west of Sailorway Middle School. They are getting together with an architect as they feel this is a good spot for the skate park. B. Warden asked if there has been any money exchanged with Team Payne. R. Hettel said no and they are very fortunate that they provided a preliminary sketch of a proposed skate park. The sketch shows the park location on the west lot of the school property.

D. Corogin referred to a price quote submitted by T. Valerius from Spohn Ranch Skateparks for materials for the current skate park. She said that R. Hettel has some other suggestions the city could do that they can talk about later. R. Hettel said he would recommend they save the money and use it on this project so they can move forward and hire a builder. As far as the current skate park he would like to recommend his expert opinion on some repairs.

R. Hettel said Team Payne would get an idea of what they would want for their community as it relates to a skate park. He said they are reviewing a 30,000 square foot park as well as looking into fundraising to make this skate park come to fruition. He said there can be outside structures at the park for people who don't skateboard. They have talked about putting a trail around the park. He showed proposed evergreen trees which is a good natural shade for a cement structure. He said because this would be in a flood plain he is looking into Natural Resource grants from the State of Ohio. He has researched other communities who received these types of grants and who are willing to help. He said they can't do the fundraising until they have a plan and a builder. The cost of the park could cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$1.5 million. However, they are creating a place for skateboarders and bikers to go to and this would be an investment for the community as it maintains itself as well. The location is ideal and the visibility is great. It could bring in events that would help support surrounding businesses.

Councilman Brian Holmes said he has received a couple phone calls relative to concerns about the school location, and he told them they would need to address their concerns with the School Superintendent because he is offering the property. He said a lot of the concerns expressed are the fact that football is played in the area they are talking about. R. Hettel said this was his first concern too and they don't want to push anybody out, but Phil Pempin is already addressing this. B. Holmes said they need to address this with the football teams, the community, and the school board. He said if the school board doesn't approve the location then they will need a backup plan. R. Hettel agreed and said they have also looked at Showse Park and West Breeze, but the residential area is a concern. B. Holmes asked about the area the city owns off Douglas/Devon Drive by the ice-skating rink. R. Hettel said he did take pictures of this location but he doesn't have a plot map of the area. D. Corogin said they could put it at this location, but in meeting with Phil Pempin they are really excited because not only do they want to create an education campus, but a wellness campus, which could be a community center. The schools have over 80 acres and putting in a walking path around the entire park is exciting. In fact, the superintendent sees this as being a really positive thing for kids and attracting young families to the community. The park will be highly visible and even parents and grandparents can park real close to the park and watch the kids skating. She said the skate park could be moved over and the area could still accommodate the football program. R. Hettel said the last thing they want to do it take somebody's space. B. Scholtz asked where they would consider parking. R. Hettel said they would add parking and it could be in front. It's something that can be discussed as they put the plan in action.

D. Brudney said he drove a school bus in Vermilion for eight years and he has a bunch of kids he still keeps in contact with and this week he had two eighth graders call him and ask him about the skate park. The word is out! R. Hettel said a lot of people are getting stoked about this proposed skate park. R. Hettel said the Tony Hawk Foundation supports this kind of community development and this is why they are going to go for his grant. He has a friend that will help him apply for it as he helped apply for the Cleveland grant that they were able to secure. He said they need things in place in order to apply for this grant. He has been getting a lot of great feedback from the community.

B. Wakefield asked what the timeframe is geared at on building a park like this. D. Corogin said Boston took 15 years to build theirs. R. Hettel said they are realistically looking at four to five years. However, it can be done sooner with a lot of community support through fundraising. D. Corogin said if the location works out it would be a partnership with the school and she doesn't know if it would be considered as their skate park, with the funding help of the Parks Board, or if it will be the city's park similar to the baseball diamonds. The liability insurance coverage and maintenance contract is something they will need to figure out prior to fundraising. She

asked if they would need to create a non-profit organization for fundraising, or will the city take this money. She said they have been looking at a skate park between 20,000 and 30,000 square feet. R. Hettel said he is waiting on a response from Team Payne to find out exactly how big the park is in the sketch. The current park is around 4,000 square feet and the surface is rough and not stable. The company that submitted the quote for material didn't include labor costs. D. Corogin said they really looked at a lot of different companies that can build skate parks, but in looking at their track record and what they build, Team Payne just stands out above everyone else. It was noted the city would have to obtain bids.

B. Holmes pointed out there will be low maintenance with a concrete surface. R. Hettel said you will have less maintenance with the correct builder and Team Payne builds in Colorado and Florida so they are used to all climates.

B. Wakefield asked R. Hettel if he would like to come back to the December parks meeting to give another update and R. Hettel said he is planning on attending the December meeting as he would like to discuss the current skate park condition and how they could rebuild it to keep it safe.

D. Corogin said skateboarding is an Olympic sport and all of these communities are building skate parks now, so it's pretty exciting to jump on this.

B. Warden asked how this park would compare in size to other parks in northern Ohio. R. Hettel said Cleveland's park is 9,000 square foot. They wanted 15,000 – 20,000 sq. ft. but because it was located by the lake they had to downsize. However, the park in Ann Arbor, Michigan is 23,000 sq. ft. so Vermilion's park would be comparable to them. B. Warden thought the park would be tremendous for the businesses along Route 60 as well, and empty storefronts could become bike or skateboard shops.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS:

Recreation Director Chad Kuhns reported that basketball and cheerleading signup's will begin in January.

Parks Director Dana Corogin said she had a meeting today with T. Valerius and an electrical engineer, and Ohio Edison about Showse Park. She said they are working on a plan to bury all overhead wires and remove unused utility poles. She noted the revetment landscaping repairs will begin as soon as the weather and water levels permit.

She also provided the board members with a list of long range planning goals for the parks. One is to form a Parks Board Committee to help create a budget for the Parks Levy and Operation funds, and to create a full time Parks Supervisor position that will need approval by city council. She said they need to visualize the entire community in what they want it to look like in terms of what the parks will offer them. She has been having meetings with Phil Pempin and they do have the property and would like to attract senior citizens, and have activities for all ages. He would even be willing to have the dog park on the school property if it fit in behind the skate park with a walking trail around it. She also spoke with Chad Kuhns because after this summer there is a good chance they will be losing the two fields that are located behind the South Street and VIS schools. For the ease of maintenance, they are looking to have it close to the campus which would be ideal. There is a piece of property that abuts up to the elementary school and they could approach the owner to see if he was willing to sell it to the schools. There is a chance they could put them in West Breeze Park to see if two fields would fit. C. Kuhns didn't believe two fields would fit there. Also, there is the Open Door area where there used to be a baseball diamond that they could look at. She is going to get a quote from the fence company to see how much it would cost to move the backstops. C. Kuhns said the backstops are in pretty rough shape. Therefore, they need to look at these locations to see what would be the best option. She would like to keep Showse and Sherod as lakefront parks and keep all the activity on the campus if at all possible. She said the volleyball courts, the skate park, the baseball diamonds, the pickle ball courts, and the dog park are all things to think about. Another item that came up during the campaign is a community Fruit and Nut Orchard which would be beautiful in

West Breeze Park or behind the Church of the Open Door. This has become popular in other communities where people can pick fruit and nuts themselves, and it's free.

She said they need to purchase a new lawnmower for spring which may be around \$8,000. She also wants to get the beach cleaner repaired and replace the pool deck, and remove the diving board and add slides. They would like to install a new gazebo and refurbish the Ohio historic marker in Victory Park. She said they would like to replace the brick bulk head and create a small brick patio, and replace railroad ties with sandstone retaining walls in East Exchange Park. Also, in Exchange Park they would like to replace the veteran's bricks. In Showse Park, complete the lighting project and revetment repairs. She also suggested grading the ice-skating rink at the west end in the spring, and to upgrade the lighting.

She said there is some equipment at the South Street School (climbing wall/slides) and she asked Phil Pempin about it who said the city can have it if they want to move it to one of the parks. She said both Showse and Sherod don't have any climbing walls. She will investigate this to see how much it would cost to move the equipment. J. Logue said it has always been his understanding that if you move a piece of equipment like this then it's not warranted by the manufacturer. D. Corogin said they would need to have it moved professionally. She said the South Street school area would also be a great place for a dog park because it's all fenced in and it's not being used by anyone. B. Wakefield said she also heard that West Breeze Park would be a great area for a dog park. D. Corogin said they would possibly need to shield those houses so she would have to research the idea. B. Holmes said he would stay away from an all concrete dog park because the heat is rough on the dog's paws.

D. Corogin said under her long range planning list they could create beautiful and unique parks that will attract new residents to Vermilion; sponsor park events; develop recreation and educational programs for all ages; build first class functional and aesthetically pleasing amenities using native sandstone when possible; work on the walkability and connectivity projects with Lorain and Huron; partner with the schools to create a wellness campus dedicated to first class education and fitness; develop a fabulous Parks & Recreation department with public presence and online programming capabilities; hire a full time Parks Supervisor, two full time parks employees, and seasonal help, as well as include a part-time parks consultant. Also, create a functional and organized parks service garage with heat and water; offer leaf composting; create winter cutting garden and tree nursery. She said these are all dreams but thinks they are all possible within the next 20 years. She said when they met to put a parks levy on the ballot they had talked about how this levy was to augment what was already the parks budget. It was noted that the money that comes in now (fund 204) for the parks is for capital improvements and the money from the recently passed park levy will go into the general fund and is for maintenance, operation, and improvements. She said if they can manage this fund very well and set up a budget that will allow for some things to get repaired, then more of the money will be freed up. They need to make sure they all work together and this is why she was hoping they could form a committee to meet with the finance director and Mayor Eileen Bulan before she leaves office, and with Jim Forthofer. She said they need to figure out how they are going to interface the two and get the most value for the citizens. B. Wakefield said they do need to put a plan together and be proactive about the direction they are going, and prioritize what has to be done first and be responsible for every dollar that goes out. There is a different purpose for each of these funds and they need to coordinate to make sure they work together. D. Corogin said she is hoping this will be discussed in city council once the budget comes around. B. Holmes said it will be discussed and believes most of city council supported the levy. If Parks Board has their priorities laid out of where the money needs to go and how they want to spend it, and are transparent, then he feels council would be in favor of what they do with those funds and hopes money from the general fund doesn't get pulled back. The question arose of when the park levy money will be available and Clerk Fisher believed it was in 2019. (Clerk's Note: Per Ordinance 2017-23, the proceeds of which levy first would be available to this City is in the calendar year 2019). D. Corogin said they can use the year to plan if they aren't going to see any money until 2019. B. Wakefield was hoping they could get a group together that can meet prior to Christmas (mid-December) to put some time and effort into this.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Wakefield House Development Committee:

J. Logue noted he will be reporting on this issue at the December meeting.

Executive Session:

B. Scholtz MOVED; B. Warden seconded to recess into Executive Session to discuss land acquisition. Vote 5 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

ADJOURNMENT:

Upon conclusion of the executive session, B. Wakefield adjourned the meeting.

NEXT MEETING:

December 19, 2017 @ 7:00 pm - Municipal Complex Courtroom (687 Decatur)

Gwen Fisher, Boards and Commissions